



# Mass. teaching force remains dominated by women

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**Just 25 percent of all public school teachers statewide were men last year.**

By [Matt Rocheleau](#)

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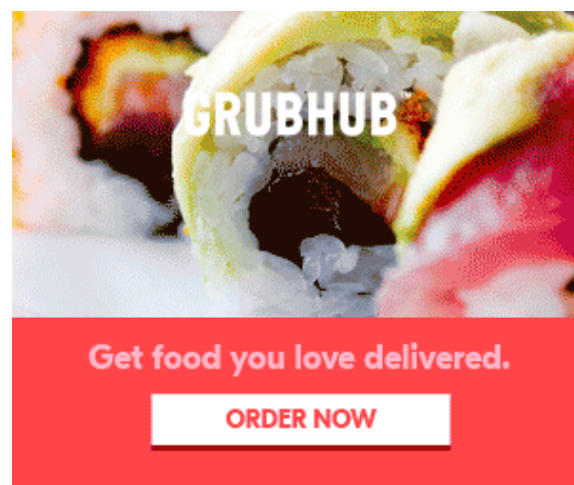
Despite efforts to recruit more male teachers, their numbers in Massachusetts public school classrooms remain stagnant, according to a Globe review.

About 25 percent of all public school teachers statewide last year were men. That figure has been fairly flat in recent years. But the share of male teachers is lower than it [was](#) in the early 1990s, when

it was about 32 percent.

The gender disparity is most pronounced at the elementary grades.

Educators say students benefit from having more male role models. Studies have shown that some boys learn better when teamed with a male teacher.



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“If students have people in front of them that look like them and that they can relate to in a different way — and you see it both with race and gender — it impacts their ability to learn,” said Liz Losee, director of educator preparation and assessment at the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

## Table: The student-teacher gender gap in each Mass. school district

See the gender breakdown of students and teachers in your local public school district.

**Mass. students are increasingly diverse. But their teachers are not.**

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Among students statewide, boys slightly outnumbered girls, 51 percent to 49 percent.

[Michael Hansen](#), an education policy researcher at [The Brookings Institution](#) in Washington, D.C., said the gender gap among teachers needs to be explored more fully.

“In general this is not something that is talked about or challenged as much in media reports or within research about teaching diversity,” Hansen said.

[The racial and ethnic diversity gap between teachers and students](#) has been studied much more closely, and research has shown that gap can be linked to lower performance among minority students.

Kim M. Janey, senior project director for the nonprofit Massachusetts Advocates for Children, said recruiting more men to teaching should be a higher priority.

“We need more males in the classroom, particularly men of color,” she said.

Thomas Scott, executive director of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, said the gender disparity is a concern for school leaders.

“Superintendents are always wanting a better gender balance, especially at the elementary level,” Scott said.

State education officials have taken measures to try to increase the share of male, as well as minority, teachers, including by [reviewing local college education programs](#) to ensure they are meeting certain criteria around diversity.

Jake Dore, 25, of Needham, began teaching at the Kelly Elementary School in Chelsea four years ago, his first job out of college.

He said he is just one of four male teachers and specialists, out of a total of about 35, at the school.



Dore said he advocates for hiring the most qualified, effective teachers above all else. But, he said, male teachers can sometimes offer a different perspective.

“I think there are times when certain teachers can have more powerful relationships with students,” said Dore. “It’s always good to have another type of voice in the classroom that can connect with students in a different way. As a student you at least want to occasionally reflect people who are like you.

“Kids need to have a good mix of male and female teachers,” Dore said.

He said becoming a teacher was not a childhood ambition.

“I don’t think I really thought about it much until later in high school and in college,” said Dore. “I had wonderful teachers growing up . . . but I didn’t have a male teacher until late in middle school and then a couple in high school.”

He said that may be why he hadn’t considered the profession when he was younger.

“It kind of creates this stigma around teaching,” for males, Dore said.

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